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ABSTRACT

A study gathered information about producers and distributors of unabridged books on cassette tape for the use of librarians engaged in collection development. Questionnaires were distributed to 48 public libraries and 45 producers/distributors. This report includes an introduction covering the history of this medium and a rationale for collecting books on cassette in the public library; a literature review; a description of the survey methodology and results; and a discussion of the findings. A two-part directory to producers/distributors based on the survey results is then presented. The first part provides the results of the producer/distributor survey questionnaire, including the addresses and telephone numbers of the respondents, information on the number and genres of available titles, and policies on discounts, damage, duplication, ordering, and shipping charges. The second part reports librarians' comments on each producer/distributor. Copies of the questionnaires and additional names, addresses, and formats for producer/distributors are appended. (48 references) (MES)

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An Evaluative Directory to Producers and Distributors of Unabridged Books on Cassette Tape

by

Preston Jones Hoffman

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and Distributors of Unabridged Books
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Preston Jones Hoffman

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ABSTRACT

This study provides information about producers and distributors of unabridged books on cassette tape for the use of librarians engaged in collection development. In response to a questionnaire, the producers and distributors provided addresses, formats, genres, discounts, and replacement, billing, and shipping policies. Twenty-five librarians evaluated the products and services of the producers and distributors they patronized. An introduction which covers the history of this medium and a rationale for collecting books on cassette in the public library are also included.

BACKGROUND

The unabridged book on cassette is a relatively new medium which is beginning to find a place in many public libraries. Still other libraries have resisted providing this service for reasons ranging from lack of space and low perceived demand to charges that the medium is inherently elite (Ballard 1986, p. 140). It may be useful to provide an outline of the reasons why the establishment and maintenance of such a collection could be a valuable asset to communities and libraries alike, with emphasis on the needs of the smaller public library.

In its guidelines for small- and medium-sized public libraries, the American Library Association (ALA) stated that: "Resources in any format, needed or requested by the library's public, should be considered for acquisition (American Library Association 1975, p. 15). This, like all ALA policies, is a recommendation only. However, it provides a clear framework for including the books on cassette medium. To "be considered for acquisition," a format must be either "requested" or "needed." Since no information is available concerning the requests of a given library's patrons, the statement of needs must take priority, though the popularity of this medium is also an issue.

Books on cassette have become popular not only because many larger libraries have begun collections of books on cassette (66% of libraries surveyed by *Library Journal* [Burns 1985, p. 38]), but also because these collections are very well used. Observation of the Durham County Public Library indicated that from 75% to 90% of the collection of 85 books on cassette were in circulation at any given time. This includes about half a dozen tapes which almost never circulate, as well as a much larger number which recirculate within a few hours of reshelving.

In weighing whether books on tape is a "needed" service, it may be worthwhile to consider that their use allows people with different learning

styles to enjoy books that they might not otherwise experience. Some people prefer listening over reading. This is one of the great growth areas that could be important in drawing new patrons to the public library. At the present time, many persons who prefer the aural experience to the visual probably do not patronize public libraries, perhaps because they are not aware of the services that are available and if they were aware would overwhelm the resources of the libraries.

Besides those individuals who merely prefer the sound experience, there are also people who suffer from a kind of cognitive dissonance in which their reading levels do not nearly match their intellectual levels. Included in this group would be those in reading classes for whom the book on cassette has proven to be a helpful tool at least in the school setting (Bliss 1979, pp. 79-82). Another group in this category is composed of recent immigrants who are learning or improving their English.

Another group which needs better access to books on cassette is the visually impaired. There is statistical evidence that the U.S. Library of Congress' Talking Books Program does not reach all those who are eligible for it much less all those who might benefit. The U.S. census estimates that there are 8,081,000 persons suffering from visual impairments, but only 297,730 (less than 5% of the potential user group) are receiving Talking Books on cassette (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1987, p. 104; Library of Congress 1987, p. 58). Perhaps they are not registered as visually impaired because they fear social and governmental discrimination, or perhaps they are unaware of the existence of the program. However, it is possible that a community-based books on tape program available to all in the public library would serve many of these individuals.

Beyond these special cases are the mass of people who are capable of reading but who prefer to listen for a number of possible reasons including restrictive travel and home schedules. Time spent commuting, exercising, or caring for children is often available for listening to but not for reading books. Also, eye fatigue through the increased use of Video Display Terminals as well as the use of print is probably on the increase ("Use of VDT's Prove Hazardous" 1984, p. 21). Many of these persons who are unlikely to use print materials could make use of books on cassette.

Besides these obvious benefits, there are others. It is conceivable that people who listen to a book on cassette by an author whom they might not otherwise read or concerning a subject they have slight interest in, may become interested in the author or subject and make use of print resources. People may be drawn into the library who might not otherwise be there at

all and while there be inspired to make use of more traditional services. Books on cassette may be used at work. There is precedent for this in that, at one time, cigar makers in Tampa, Florida had books read to skilled laborers while they worked (Vila 1987).

There have been some negative reactions to including this medium in public libraries, but the ubiquity of the cassette tape player in this country seems not to have been considered. In reality this is a plebeian medium which can bring intellectual pleasure to those previously satisfied with the lowest common denominator approach of most radio and television. It has also been claimed that the abridged format is more practical than the unabridged but without any evidence or even substantial reasons given (Greenhalgh 1986, p. 112).

Some librarians in this study have claimed that abridged books on cassette are preferable to unabridged versions. The usual reasons given are cost and patron desires. As for cost, it is possible to obtain unabridged recordings for less *per cassette* than abridged or condensed ones if one patronizes the more economically priced suppliers. As for patron preferences, this author has listened to a number of both types and finds the unabridged superior in many ways. At any rate, an ideal collection should probably include both types.

It seems clear that there is a need for books on cassette collections in small-to medium-sized public libraries. In many cases, the fact that this medium is technically similar to videotape has led to confusion about the relative merits and roles of these two media. Until recently, relatively few titles have been available, and information about producers and distributors has been lacking. However, there are now thousands of titles in many different genres and this paper addresses the latter problem. Finally, isn't this medium just another way of facilitating the public library's traditional service of books for people?

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to provide information about books on cassette. The primary focus is on library acquisition and use of the unabridged format, but much of the introduction, history, and analysis may be of broader interest. The work is not only a working tool but also helps fill a need for information about this relatively new medium.

The unabridged book on cassette completes a nearly full circle begun about 2500 years ago when the previously oral poetry of Homer was

divided into books and transcribed onto papyrus. Since these first "recordings" of Western literature were made, improvements in technology have allowed progressively greater fidelity. The first attempts to record vocal interpretations of literature made use of the best available machinery to reproduce authors and actors doing their performances. During the eras of cylinder and disk technologies, these attempts were of passing interest to all except historians. Even after the introduction of long-playing records and reel-to-reel tapes, recordings of literature other than poetry, short stories, and excerpts from longer works were available, for the most part, only through the Library of Congress' Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. Not until the introduction of the cassette tape in the early 1960s was a medium available suitable for unabridged books for general use (Saddington & Cooper 1976, p. 14).

Even though this medium was intended originally for the spoken word, the popularity of music cassettes and the resulting ubiquity of the cassette player (especially the portable "walkman" and the car tape machine) have helped create conditions favoring the sudden growth of interest in books on cassette. During the 1970s, two institutions made considerable contributions to this interest. The first of these is National Public Radio which made available to its member stations certain programs, especially "Radio Reader," which encouraged the habit of listening to prose readings (Blais was 1984, pp. 36-37). The second is the corporation Books on Tape (Costa Mesa, California) founded by Duval Hecht (which now distributes "Radio Reader"). By making books on cassette available for sale to libraries, and most especially for rental to individuals, and through a persistent but low-key advertising campaign, Books on Tape has helped make this medium widely available. Earlier efforts in this direction by firms like Caedmon and Spoken Arts had always followed the abridged short form pattern (Rotenberg 1986, p. 48; Spain 1986, p. 32).

The majority of the several hundred producers/distributors of books on cassette still follow this pattern, but more than 20 firms have followed Books on Tape into the unabridged market or have benefited from the Books on Tape distribution network. Today several thousand unabridged "volumes" are available in English. New ground is being broken by pioneer authors like Vladimir Voinovich, who is planning to "distribute" his works in the Soviet Union via the BBC Overseas Service via individual "samizdat on tape" (Danner 1987, p. 36, sec. 7).

A note about terminology may be in order here. "Unabridged books on cassette tape" is a phrase too clumsy to be used often. The phrases "talking books" and "books on tape" are copyrighted respectively by the Library of

Congress and the California corporation of the same name. Therefore the term *books on cassette* seems to be the best for all versions, unabridged and otherwise. Whatever the name, as people spend more time commuting and using video display terminals, the medium can only become more necessary and popular.

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Articles and Essays

One new format that has been added to public library collections in recent years that has received relatively little notice except from publishers, audio-video librarians, and library patrons is the unabridged book on cassette tape. Perhaps the newness of the medium partially explains why so little attention has been paid by scholars in the field, even though books on cassette are responsible for increasingly large portions of both circulation figures and acquisition budgets.

Publisher's Weekly

Publisher's Weekly (PW) is responsible for more material about books on cassette than are all other publications combined with the exception of bibliographies in reference works. A brief chronological examination of some major articles seems appropriate. As books on cassette have become a major business, PW has increased its coverage accordingly. Abridged tapes that are sold in bookstores and by other retail firms are the major focus of attention, but since some publishers/distributors deal in abridged, condensed, and unabridged formats, there is considerable overlap as well as a few articles devoted mainly or exclusively to the unabridged form.

Publisher's Weekly apparently first addressed this subject in March 1984 in the department "Bookselling & Merchandising" (Blaiwas 1984a, pp. 36-40). This article discusses the future of the books on cassette medium and identifies the important influence in the early popularization of books on cassette by their broadcast on some National Public Radio affiliated stations (Blaiwas 1984a, pp. 36-37). The article also identifies 11 publishers/distributors, discusses the genres each carries, gives the suggested bookstore prices and discounts offered, and provides addresses.

Apparently there was interest in this "representative list," for six months later another list of 26 publishers/distributors was provided which included some duplication but was "expanded to include language tapes and additional recordings for children" (Blaiwas 1984b, p. 83). Each of

these lists identifies one producer of unabridged books on cassette, and we may reasonably assume that the others provide primarily or exclusively abridged or condensed versions. Books on cassette were largely ignored in 1985 with only two slightly relevant articles on the subject, but the first month of 1986 marked a sharp increase in interest.

In January 1986, in the "Software Publishing & Selling" department of PW are portraits of several individuals engaged in "audio abridgment" who explain and defend their craft (Masello 1986, pp. 51-53). In February's issue there is a feature article on one of the established publishers in the field, Spoken Arts (Rotenberg 1986, pp. 48-50).

After 30 years in this area, this corporation is thriving like never before. It is claimed that the personal touches that have given them such an excellent reputation in furnishing tapes of short classic literature, poetry, drama, etc. will not be lost. (Spoken Arts, however, does not publish long prose works.) A few months later, PW focused on another of the established names in audio publishing, Caedmon Audio and Tape Data Media, in business for 34 years and dependent upon the library and school markets (Spain 1986a, pp. 30-32). Like Spoken Arts, Caedmon was not intensively involved in long-format products; though, unlike Spoken Arts, Caedmon planned to change its marketing emphasis to appeal more to retail outlets. Fortunately there were no plans to change their long-held policy, which is shared with Spoken Arts, of never letting a title go "out of print" (Spain 1986a, p. 32).

During May 1986, *Publisher's Weekly* announced the formation of a new organization to be called the Audio Publishers Association, which met for the first time during the American Book Association convention (Spain 1986b, p. 52). With this article, the books on cassette information moved from "Software Publishing and Selling" to a new department, "Audio/Video Plus."

In its next article, PW very ambitiously probed the Audio Publishers Association's "unified call for quantitative analysis of the audio industry" (Masello 1986, p. 83). "Significant market research evaluation" has been done, but much of it "remains proprietary information." Most of the article therefore focused more on the research methods used than on the results. The methods included close monitoring of sales, the polling of consumer panels and groups by outside consulting firms, reviews of the published literature, sending out questionnaires and consumer response cards, and telephone calls to random customers.

A PW article in July explored further the plans and difficulties encountered by the Audio Publishers Association, especially the problems of

competing corporations in working together (Spain 1986c, pp. 27-28). In August a milestone was passed when articles appeared in *Publisher's Weekly* dealing with Newman Communication's plans to produce audio anthologies of short stories published in *Esquire* magazine, and giving their first review of a single offering, "Ten Classics in Ten Minutes" (Spain 1986d, p. 48; Spain 1986e, p. 48). This novelty "abridgment," which has little to recommend it beyond its sales figures, received the first individual review: is this an indication of the state of audio publishing or of just the interests of PW? Appropriately, the next article looks at the various approaches taken by newspapers and magazines in reviewing spoken-word audio products (Zinsser 1986, pp. 38-42). These various approaches call attention to the problems that librarians have in dealing with this medium. The exemplar in the field seems to be *The Washington Post* which began a "Recorded Books" bimonthly column in September 1985 (Zinsser 1986, p. 38). Their reviewer deals with such problems as "compared and contrasted three different audio versions of Stephen Crane's *Red Badge of Courage*, concentrating on how the different narrators used regional accents" (Zinsser 1986, p. 38).

Publisher's Weekly also identifies other publications committed to reviewing books on cassette in the same format and place as they do books. These include *The Village Voice*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The San Diego Union*, and *Newsday*. Publications that have relegated reviews of audio to the lifestyle section include *The San Francisco Examiner* and *The Philadelphia Enquirer*. Other publications (e.g., *The New York Times* and *The Christian Science Monitor*) have chosen to ignore the medium entirely (as of November 1987).

Publisher's Weekly begins the next year with an article focusing on Brilliance Corporation which, like Norwood Industries, unfortunately uses recording techniques requiring special equipment for playback and are therefore unsuitable for library use (Tangorra 1987, pp. 52-54). In February, *Publisher's Weekly* takes up "the publishers that limit themselves exclusively to unabridged recordings [and who] think of themselves as the small presses of the audio business" (Zinsser 1987, p. 52). Of these concerns, Audio Contractors and Recorded Books seem to have found their niche with mostly rentals and library sales, while Books on Tape and a new entry, Cover to Cover, see the boom in abridged books as indicative of possible increased sales of unabridged versions to consumers.

Other Periodicals

Publications other than *Publisher's Weekly* deal with the subject of books on cassette. One of the first articles to appear remains useful—i.e., Bryan

Davis's primer in *The Unabashed Librarian*, which was republished in slightly different form in *American Libraries* the following year (Davis 1983, pp. 21-25). He closely examines the virtues and flaws of the major publishers and mentions several smaller firms which offer superior service. He also discusses the equipment used and the repackaging and cataloging of books on cassette. The major point is that at the public library where Davis is director, 111 books on cassette titles accounted for 2% of the library's total circulation, though composing only .15% of the total collection in all formats (Cattell 1986, p. 598). Unfortunately all of his experience is with abridged works.

Another group of articles which are valuable as indicators of trends are the surveys of *Library Journal* (Avalone & Fox 1986a, pp. 79-82; Avalone & Fox 1986b, pp. 35-37; Burns 1985, pp. 38-39; Lettner 1985, pp. 35-37). These informal polls cannot be considered serious research because the criteria for selection of the libraries surveyed are unknown and most of the results are reported in anecdotal form. Nevertheless, it is of interest that a large majority of these libraries have collections of books on cassette and that interest in and usage of this format is growing at a rapid pace.

Other periodicals also touch the subject of books on cassette. *School Library Journal* reviews some titles and lists 16 publishers/distributors though the titles are mostly young adult reading (Sutton 1986, pp. 21-24). *The Writer* also provided an evaluative listing of publishers/distributors which included information on genres, prices, and policies as well as addresses (Brower 1986, pp. 22-23). *American Bookseller* also lists and evaluates sources of books on cassette (Turner 1987, pp. 27-29).

Only two research articles on this topic could be found. Both have to do with young people's use of books on cassette. In Wisconsin, a program was instituted in the public schools for nonreaders and unwilling readers (Bliss 1979, pp. 79-82). These secondary school students were isolated in the school library with a book, a tape player, and a copy of the book on tape. Then they were encouraged to read along as they listened. Forty-three of the 45 students improved their reading skills. Many were soon able to read books at an appropriate level without assistance. Apparently the impersonal and nonjudgmental help of the machine, plus the absence of distractions, made reading possible for these students (Bliss 1979, pp. 79-82).

Research done in the Hosholm Public Library in Denmark is also relevant to the question of the educational value of books on cassette (Hviid 1983, pp. 97-98). Through interviews with children and parents, it was found that books on cassette: (1) did not decrease parental reading to children; (2) encouraged use of print; (3) stimulated language use; and (4) provided

intellectual and emotional pleasure. Though the article fails to indicate that this study is free of the natural tendency of parents and children to put a good face upon a practice they have found useful and enjoyable, this is the best information obtained to date. And it is possible that points two, three, and four are relevant to adult use as well. Certainly the author is convinced of their value as she says: "We must learn to accept talking books just as we have accepted other new materials which have come into libraries in recent years, and of course give them the same critical evaluation as other materials" (Hviid 1983, p. 98).

The best discussion of books on cassette is a chapter entitled "Talking Books" in the British monograph *Fiction in Libraries* (Greenhalgh 1986, pp. 112-26). This essay, brief as it is, seems to be the only published history of this format. However, it suffers from the fact that the author, Michael Greenhalgh, postulates that unabridged books are not a viable format, but that: "Rather the modern prototype should be the public readings of Charles Dickens, for which he took key chapters from his novels and presented these as dramatic episodes" (Greenhalgh 1986, pp. 112-26). A very good annotated list of British producers/distributors is included, though the British emphasis limits the work's value for U.S. librarians.

Reference Books

There is a shortage of monographic works devoted to unabridged books on cassette. However, in the last few years, a number of reference works have been published which, to a greater or lesser degree, include this medium.

One of the newest and by far the most useful of these works is Bowker's *On Cassette: A Comprehensive Bibliography of Spoken Word Audio Cassettes (Books in Print for this medium)* listing more than 11,500 titles (Lee 1985). The directory of publishers/distributors is the most complete available, though some sources are omitted. There are title, author, reader/performer, and subject indexes. The title index subsumes the others and also includes running time, abridgment (if any), price, order number, and some nonevaluative annotations. Unfortunately, the price increased from \$59.95 for the initial edition (1986) to \$79.95 for the 1987 edition.

Another expensive source (at \$74.95) is the *Audiocassette Finder: A Subject Guide to Literature Recorded on Audiocassettes* (National Information Center for Educational Media [NICEM] 1986). This is a NICEM production with 26,000 entries of primarily educational materials, few of which conform to the unabridged book on cassette format. It has title entries with some annotations and a subject index but lacks prices and an author index. Potentially more useful is *Words on Tape: An International Guide to*

Recorded Books, published by Meckler, which lists more than 10,000 titles (*Words on Tape* 1987). This is reasonably priced (\$19.95) and has more complete annotations than *On Cassette* and more complete indexes than the *Audiocassette Finder*. In general, it covers materials which are not in the NICEM reference, and an index of publishers and distributors is included which, though shorter than that of *On Cassette*, lists many companies not found in the Bowker publication. If a librarian is searching for a specific title or author and is willing to accept limited coverage of sources this index is adequate. The *Directory of Spoken-Word Audio Cassettes* is similar but, because it excludes literature entirely, is of little interest here (McKee 1983).

A reference with a different emphasis is J. Michael Pemberton's *Policies of Audiovisual Producers and Distributors: A Handbook for Acquisition Personnel* (Pemberton 1984). This index includes much of the very specific information that librarians need: i.e., special pricing, order contacts, and replacement policies. Unfortunately, in its attempt to cover all audiovisual media, only two producers/distributors of books on cassette are included. The work also suffers from a lack of organization and a confusing format. Therefore, it is very difficult for the user to compare the policies of the various producers/distributors. A British work of value is George Saddington's *Audiocassettes as Library Materials: An Introduction*. This is a definitive work in the field of storage, repair, and handling of cassettes (Saddington & Cooper 1976). Another monograph of some relevance is *Managing Multimedia Libraries*. It is devoted to the theory and philosophy of acquisitions, cataloging, circulation, etc. but does not directly deal with cassettes as a medium (Hicks & Tillin 1977).

This review suggests that there are many gaps which need to be filled in the literature on unabridged books on cassette tape. The journals that serve the public library community seem to have ignored the topic for the most part. Research has been done by corporations but very little is available to the public. Furthermore, no reference works specific to books on cassette are available.

METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

Methodology

It is clear that an imbalance exists concerning the unabridged book on cassette tape. Interest in this format seems very high among businessmen involved in production and distribution. Interest is perhaps equally high

among members of the general public who have begun to buy, rent, and borrow tapes, yet it is somewhat less pronounced among professional working librarians. And, unfortunately, library scholars, writers, and editors seem virtually uninterested in books on cassette of any type. This writer's interest began with listening to public radio which broadcasts many spoken word programs especially in South Carolina. Garden work and even putting children to bed began to be scheduled in conformance with public radio. These tasks, somewhat tedious ordinarily, were made much more enjoyable by the availability of interesting and entertaining programs.

A search of public libraries in the vicinity of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill revealed that the Durham County Public Library does offer unabridged books on cassette for loan and that the service is very popular. An examination of how this service has been managed revealed a need for information about producers and distributors of books on tape which would allow librarians to do a better job of acquisition. There are many unresolved difficulties in dealing with unabridged books on tape including: (1) identifying the best sources, (2) formulating a rationale for their acquisition by public libraries, (3) creating acceptable policies for establishing collections, (4) establishing this format's value versus the value of abridged versions, and (5) measuring demand.

The first attempt at gathering information consisted of distributing a user survey at the Durham County Public Library. This pilot study was flawed in many ways, but it did confirm the previously subjective impression that this format is in demand by the public far more than most librarians realize. Also the large number of uses to which people put books on tape was impressive. It is true that the automobile was the most common place for use, but most listening is done at home, at work, and other places according to this author's unpublished pilot study.

However, rather than approach the problem from the perspective of demand, it was decided to attempt to improve librarians' decision-making concerning acquisition and replacement. The confusion of different vendors, many of whom handle each others products (and add a surcharge to the price of their source either directly or by eliminating discounts), seems to be one of the barriers which has prevented this format from becoming more available. Many librarians who have been acquiring books on tape for a considerable time period have valuable information about the producers and distributors for those just beginning a collection. Therefore, it was decided to create an evaluative directory of producers and distributors of unabridged books on tape.

First, questionnaires were designed both for the producers and distributors and a selected group of librarians. From the beginning it was decided that a one-page questionnaire would be more respondent-friendly and thus more likely to be completed and returned. As a general guide to the form of the questions, Dillman's (1978) *Mail and Telephone Surveys* was invaluable. The producer/distributor questionnaire evolved into a set of objective questions focusing on the formats and genres available and the terms and procedures to be followed (see Appendix A for a copy of this instrument). Special interest was paid to each producer/distributor's policies toward replacement of damaged tapes and the duplication of these tapes by libraries. It is possible that one barrier to the collection of these multiple cassette sets is the fear that one or more cassettes will be damaged and replacements will be difficult or impossible to obtain.

The questionnaire for librarians was designed to obtain more subjective information—i.e., the questions asked solicited more opinions and impressions, and more provision was made for open-ended answers. Questions about price, quality, packaging, and replacement policies were included. Therefore, this information varied much more than does the producer/distributor information. One librarian's moderate price may be another's low one. Also, different librarians have different experiences with the same firms. However, patterns did emerge which revealed a great deal about the services offered.

An attempt was made to find the name and address of every producer and distributor in this field. This was accomplished by examining the directories of the three available references which cover the format: *On Cassette*, *Words on Tape*, and *The Audiocassette Finder*. In each reference, entries were examined for every firm listed that might conceivably handle the unabridged format. To a certain extent this was a subjective judgment, but questions were resolved on the side of inclusion. Other sources for names and addresses were: (1) advertisements in various publications, (2) mention of possible producers/distributors in articles, and (3) the catalogs of the Durham County Public Library Audio-visual Department. Then the names and addresses were merged with another file containing the questionnaire thus creating an individualized questionnaire to be mailed to each producer/distributor. A cover letter and a stamped, self-addressed envelope were enclosed.

Before the mailing was done for the whole group of about 40 producers/distributors, a preliminary mailing was made to 12 of them. More than half of these responded, and it was determined that no changes needed to be made to the questionnaire. The initial mailing was followed by a postcard

after about two weeks (somewhat longer than advocated by Dillman) that functioned both as a thank you and a reminder. These were sent only to producers/distributors who had not responded. After another similar interval, a second follow-up was mailed containing a new cover letter and questionnaire.

The selection of the 48 subjects for the library portion of the study necessitated a different approach. There was no hope of polling more than a representative sample. It was determined that a number approaching 50 subjects would be reasonable. Therefore, several representative East Coast and Midwestern states were chosen at random (North Carolina, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Minnesota). The researcher examined the *American Library Directory* and chose the names of all audiovisual and media public librarians as the potential subjects. It was felt that libraries which put enough emphasis upon nonprint media to have a departmental librarian would also be likely (or more likely) to have books on cassette collections.

Once again a test mailing was made, this time to 15 libraries, and no changes in the instrument were deemed necessary. The follow-up mailing consisted only of the thank you reminder card. The returns were merely adequate with 50% of the libraries replying. There were various interpretations of the instructions. For example, respondents were told to put NA on the top of one of their two forms if they had no unabridged collection. From the prices that were quoted and other details, it was possible to determine that a few librarians filled out the form even though their collections consisted of abridged materials only. One person in this situation called the researcher for further instructions. The directory includes this data, since in many cases experience with ordering abridged materials from producers/distributors produced relevant information.

The subjects were provided with two forms to encourage them to report on more than one producer/distributor. They were also asked to duplicate the forms if they had experience with more than two producers/distributors. A few did so. Unlike the producer/distributor forms, the only identification on each form was a number used to determine which respondents had replied in order to coordinate the follow-up. They were advised to place their names and addresses on the back of the envelope if they wished to receive a complimentary copy of the directory. A few did this, and some others wrote asking for a copy.

Results

The original list of 45 producers/distributors included five names for which addresses proved unobtainable, at least in time to be sent questionnaires. Some of these may be "ghost" organizations, the names of which

result from slight errors, especially in some of the articles which were examined. Four were returned with various notations by the U.S. Post Office (addressee unknown, unable to forward, etc.), and three of the addresses proved to be different addresses for the same organization. One firm replied that they do not produce or distribute unabridged books on tape. Of the 32 remaining producers/distributors, replies were received from 24. This is a return rate of 75%. It may be assumed that many of the seven organizations which have not replied are not producers/distributors of unabridged books on tape and/or feel the directory is irrelevant to them. Most of the respondents (21) appeared to be producers and distributors. Twenty-two claimed to handle unabridged books, 8 abridged, 7 condensed, and 1 excerpts (totals are more than 24 because some handle more than one format).

It is assumed that the unabridged format contains the complete work as found in a standard edition. However, the terms *abridged* and *condensed* produced some confusion. Originally it was thought that "abridged" applied to works which had been shortened without substantially altering the words of the author while "condensed" referred to a summary or precis. The terms were adapted from the catalogs of the producers/distributors. Some claimed to offer both forms for sale. In fact, there is very little or no lexical difference between the terms. Abridge comes from Latin "abbreviare" through Old French and has been used to mean "to make things shorter in words" since at least 1393 (Murray 1933, s.v. "abridge"). *Condense* comes from Latin "condensare," and has been used to mean "to compress thought or meaning into few words" since 1805 (Murray 1933, s.v. "condense"). One producer/distributor questioned this usage, and suggested the addition of the term *original* for works specifically written for this medium. This was a good suggestion but came too late to alter the questionnaire. Another producer/distributor added the term *excerpts*, which does differ lexically from the earlier terms. It has meant "a passage taken out of a printed book or manuscript" since at least 1638. This term was not used in any catalogs or reference works so it was not used in the questionnaire.

Sound effects and music were equally prevalent with eight producers/distributors with some having one but not the other and some both. As for genres, the most popular one was "classics" with 17, followed by "nonfiction" and "modern fiction" with 16 apiece. "Science fiction" is next with 15 each, while 14 producers/distributors handle "self-help" and "poetry" with "mystery" trailing with 12. "Children's stories" (not the subject of the study) were mentioned by seven; "drama" by two; and the following categories by one producer/distributor each: "subliminal self-help,"

"health," "new age," "adventure," "horror," "biography," "autobiography," "New England yarns," "sports," "young adult fiction," "westerns," "myths," "fairy tales," "novels," "essays," "history," and "speeches."

Most of the producers/distributors offered some kind of discount, but terms varied widely. Damage and duplication policies also differed. One company allowed libraries to duplicate all recordings (Books in Motion) and three claimed to replace any damaged cassette free (Mind's Eye, Spoken Word, and Listening Library). On the other hand, several companies provided little information about their replacement policies and refused to allow duplication. The most common policy was replacement at original price or \$5 to \$6 per cassette, and many replaced defective tapes gratis. Some producers/distributors allowed duplication "conditionally," but none provided details. Most producers/distributors did not accept collect calls for ordering materials, but some had "800" numbers. Most handled rush and back orders, though in the case of the latter category, this may not be much of an advantage. Policies on shipping and credit also varied widely.

As previously stated, 50% of the 48 librarians responded, and these returned 34 questionnaires about 12 different producers/distributors. G.K. Hall was the most patronized producer/distributor with 11 responses, and Recorded Books followed closely with 7. Listen for Pleasure and Books on Tape received three responses apiece. Two companies which are exclusively distributors received two responses—Baker & Taylor and Carolina Cassette. Chivers, distributed by G.K. Hall, also received two responses. Four producers/distributors were included by one respondent each (Brilliance, Ulverscroft, Mind's Eye, and American Audio Prose Library), and one distributor was mentioned once (Ingram). Three of the mentioned companies were not sent questionnaires—Baker & Taylor, Carolina Cassette (for which no addresses were available), and Chivers, because it is based in Britain. Therefore, 9 of the producers/distributors who responded are included in the library portion of the directory, while 10 received no mention from the 24 librarians. In general, the respondents agreed about the firms, with the "quality" questions producing the most variation among them.

Among the genres, "modern fiction" was the most popular with 27 mentions. "Mystery" followed closely with 25 and "classics" with 21. "Nonfiction" materials had been purchased by 16 librarians, "science fiction" by 14, and "self-help" (a category added by the respondents) by 6. Poetry was mentioned by four librarians and all the other categories were added by one librarian. They were "romance," "juvenile," "business," "radio plays,"

and "Westerns." Other than the reversal of the positions of "nonfiction" and "mystery" for the two groups, supply and demand seem pretty well matched.

Most respondents offered opinions about the price of the materials, and about half gave examples. The majority also offered opinions about technical quality, style quality, and durability; and some added experiences and opinions as well. Most responded to the question about library discounts, but few offered information about them. Many responded to the questions about damage policy offering a great deal of information concerning the suitability of packaging. Few problems were discussed, but many librarians made informative comments. In general the information they provided was appropriate and should be useful to other librarians.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

This research project was not intended to be quantitative or analytical, nor does the information obtained readily lend itself to statistical analysis. On the other hand, it does seem appropriate to make a few specific and general remarks.

All but three of the producers/distributors responding considered themselves to be both producers and distributors. One firm—Bantam—is a producer only and two—Ingram and In the Groove—are distributors only. This seems to indicate a predominance of small, vertically integrated firms serving this market. It is this researcher's guess that some of these companies will not survive as separate entities but will either disappear entirely or be absorbed by larger, more aggressive firms.

The number of titles ranged from a low of 4 (Stemmer House) to a high of 2500 (Books on Tape). But as one librarian noted, not all of the latter's titles are actually for sale, their main business being rental to individuals. Most producers/distributors offered several hundred unabridged titles.

As for the version offered, all except American Audio Prose Library include unabridged tapes among their titles. American Audio offers only excerpts of longer works. Since they were considerate enough to provide the information, it was decided to include them in the directory. It should be noted that many firms offered other versions (especially abridged ones), sometimes in much larger quantity than unabridged versions. Only one of the producers/distributors that offered primarily unabridged materials used sound effects, and only three in this group made use of music. This is an

appropriate decision, as the listener usually is so occupied in absorbing the primary information available in an unabridged recording that the added distractions of sound effects and music are unnecessary.

It may be a good sign for the health of the medium that modern fiction and classics lead in the number of offerings. Producers/distributors seem to think that this is an appropriate medium for materials of lasting value as well as for the ever popular mystery, which is third in availability. The relative unpopularity of nonfiction and science fiction may be a result of the fact that many of the smaller firms concentrate on noncopyrighted works, and relatively few titles in these genres may be potentially popular.

The problem of discounts and terms thereof is one which seems almost impossible to analyze. Let it just be said that most offered a discount and these ranged from 10% to 40%. This problem of discounts will have to be balanced against the original prices, the terms demanded, and the other relevant factors by every librarian faced with this decision. Another important question partially answered by this survey is that of damage/duplication/replacement.

As was noted in the section on methodology and results, the policies vary from no duplication and no apparent replacement policy to "conditional" duplication allowed (but not one producer/distributor provided the conditions), to very clear but limited policies, to one producer/distributor (Books in Motion) which allows unlimited duplication. A policy of this sort could, in the long run, be very valuable to a library willing to take advantage of it. And given the possibility (indeed likelihood) that some of the producers/distributors will disappear in the coming years, this policy could make the difference between a viable collection and the termination of many titles. Firms like Audio Accessories, In the Groove, and Stemmer House, which lack clear replacement policies and do not allow duplication, may put themselves in the position of coming under 17 USC Section 108 (c) 1982 interpreting the Copy Right Revision Act of 1976. Since there is no opportunity to replace damaged materials, library duplication may be permissible (Heller & Wiant 1984). As for the remaining producer/distributor categories, little discussion is necessary. It might be noted that "rush" orders may be important—especially in the case of damaged materials—but in most cases back orders are an inconvenience from the library point of view.

In analyzing the data received from librarians, it seems clear that supply and demand works pretty well in most cases with modern fiction being first for both groups. The one exception is that there is much more demand for

mysteries than supply with the reverse being true for nonfiction. The other genres seemed well balanced.

Only five of the producers/distributors were mentioned often enough in the returns from librarians to make intelligent discussion possible. By far the most popular was G.K. Hall with 11 returns (13 if 2 forms concerning Chivers distributed by G.K. Hall are included). With this number of returns, the strengths and weaknesses of this producer/distributor are clearly evident. Most respondents thought Hall was moderately priced, the technical and style quality received mostly "good" ratings, and the packaging is now suitable. However, the durability of the tapes is questionable, with five adequate rankings and four good ones. This is a very important point when considering purchase of tapes that are going to be under almost constant use. Apparently Hall's discount plan (standing orders only) was not very attractive since only 2 of the 12 respondents used it. None of the respondents gave reasons. There were some problems with the replacement of damaged tapes and orders. This author has listened to many of these tapes, and the primarily British actors are often excellent, but there are some deficiencies. There is no indication on the soundtrack as to which side of which tape one may be listening to or as to when it ends, and this causes many problems when listening in a vehicle or in the dark.

Recorded Books was the second most popular producer/distributor with seven forms received from librarians. All of the librarians thought their prices were moderate. Technical and style quality are felt to be good to excellent, and there were no complaints about durability though the rankings are only slightly better than G.K. Hall's. Many more of the librarians took advantage of the discount though it is relatively small (10%). Both their damage policy and their packaging seemed to please almost everybody. This researcher has listened to a number of their tapes and the readings are more matter of fact and less dramatic than G.K. Hall's, move very quickly, and are easier to use since the number of the tape and the end of each side is announced.

Another source which received returns sufficient to discuss was Listen for Pleasure. Their prices are considered moderate by all, and the technical and style qualities are comparable to the earlier mentioned producers/distributors. Durability seems better than the earlier mentioned sources, and this firm offers the best discount available—40% if 15 or more titles are purchased. The damage policy seems adequate, but the packaging is not as suitable as that of the earlier discussed sources. This researcher has listened to some of these tapes and finds them very similar to those of Recorded Books with perhaps a little more emphasis upon "dramatic reading."

The only other producer/distributor which received enough returns to discuss is Books on Tape. It was surprising there were so few (3), as they are the best known firm in this field (established 1974), and they advertise widely. However, they have, until recently, discouraged library sales by offering minimal packaging, and, though they have the largest number of titles, only some of these are offered for sale. These problems, along with shipping and ordering difficulties and the fact that their titles per cassette are the most expensive on the market, make their lack of popularity understandable. The fact that they have not tried to attract the library market may be one reason why so many smaller firms have sprung up. One indication that the management of Books on Tape may be changing course in the near future is the fact that they now offer library packaging. Though they were first in this field, their products have some shortcomings. Some of the readers have unpleasant voices, and their policy of including all the information on the title page, plus the introduction, preface, dedications, etc. is sometimes annoying. A reader of a print copy can skip this material, but it is difficult to avoid on a cassette.

None of the other producers/distributors received enough returns to discuss authoritatively, but it may be appropriate to call attention to some of the special features available. The fact that Books in Motion offers a 25% discount and allows duplication makes them a very interesting source indeed. Conceivably, an ambitious librarian could copy the originals and circulate duplicates virtually forever. Brilliance Corporation offers excellent services but requires a machine with stereo balance controls or a special adaptor. Two producers/distributors have expressed interest in breaking into the library market—Books for Listening and Mind's Eye—and may become superior companies to deal with. Also, libraries should not forget the old standbys in the audiotape business, Spoken Arts and Caedmon. Both offer a large number of titles in many different genres.

There is one more problem: the distributor or "jobber" of audiotapes. Some libraries have decided to patronize these firms exclusively. Perhaps they believe that the higher costs of the materials will be offset by the ease in dealing with one supplier. They may be correct in this assumption, but two problems should be mentioned. First, libraries restrict themselves to the limited number of producers/distributors handled by any particular jobber when they adopt this strategy. Second, if libraries do not patronize alternative sources, over a period of time these other sources may disappear, and the result could be higher prices and reduced supplies. However, for those libraries that prefer this strategy, three of these firms are included in the directory proper, and others are listed in Appendix C.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE DIRECTORY

This directory is composed of two parts. The first consists of the results from a questionnaire (Appendix A) sent to all identifiable producers and distributors of unabridged books on tape. This information is, for the most part, objective, but the reader should be aware that it was furnished by the producers/distributors themselves. The information was transcribed just as it appeared on the questionnaire, except that obvious errors of punctuation and spelling were corrected. In one case in which handwriting was absolutely illegible, a question mark appears in the place of a word. A further list of producers/distributors who did not respond appears in Appendix C.

The second part needs more explanation. All the information gathered from the questionnaire (Appendix B) sent to public audiovisual librarians is gathered under the heading of the producer/distributor named. The number of returns is indicated by a number in parentheses after the name. In this case, as in all others, no number means "one." When tabulating under the specific headings, categories, and remarks which could not be summed are separated by "...". When more than one librarian gave the same answer to any question, the number of librarians who gave that answer is given in parentheses. Once again all remarks were transcribed following as closely as possible their original form. This information is subjective in nature, and represents the opinions of the anonymous respondents. A few anomalies emerged, as in the librarian who had never used a certain producer/distributor's replacement policy, but found it satisfactory nonetheless. Such responses were duly recorded.

INFORMATION FROM PRODUCER/DISTRIBUTOR QUESTIONNAIRE

AMERICAN AUDIO PROSE LIBRARY, P.O. Box 842, 1015 E. Broadway,
Columbia, MO 65205. Ph. (314) 443-0361

Producer & distributor: 400 (approximate) titles. Excerpts, no special effects, music
Genres: Science fiction, other modern fiction

Discounts available. Terms: Minimum order requirements-special library
program

Damage: at original price

Duplication permitted conditionally

Collect calls not accepted

Orders handled by Order Dept.

Special orders: rush & back

Shipping charges: foreign orders are asked to specify surface or air delivery

Other information: tapes are author readings only

AUDIO ACCESSORIES COMPANY. 38W515 Deerpath Road, Batavia IL 60510. Ph. (312) 879-5998

Producer & distributor; 121 titles (exact). Unabridged versions, no special effects, no music

Genres: Children's nature stories, New England Yarns and Stories, Sports

Discounts available. Terms: automatic discount to orders on library orders

Damage: will replace any defective cassette program received in that condition

Duplication not permitted

Collect calls not accepted

Orders to sales department

Special orders: rush & back

Shipping charges (UPS or other instructed freight costs) are added to invoice.

AUDIO BOOK CONTRACTORS, INC., Classic Books on Cassettes. P.O. Box 40115, Washington, DC 20016. Ph. (202) 363-3429

Producer and distributor; 108 titles. Unabridged versions, no special effects, no music

Genres: Mystery classics, poetry

Discounts available. Terms: 10% discount

Duplication not permitted

Damage: if damage is our fault, no cost. If lost, stolen, or damaged after first play, we replace at \$5 per cassette + \$1 postage & handling

Collect calls not accepted

Special orders: rush & back

Shipping charges are \$2.50 for the 1st album + \$1 for each additional album. \$4 for 1st class + \$1 for each additional

BANTAM AUDIO PUBLISHERS. 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103. Ph. (212) 765-6500 or (800) 223-5780

Producer; 76 titles. Condensed versions, special effects, music

Genres: Modern fiction, nonfiction, self-help, classics, poetry, children's stories, subliminal self-help, health, new age.

Discounts available. Terms: If cannot be purchased through college bookstore, must be paid in advance

Duplication not permitted

Damage: replacement upon receipt of proof of purchase and/or defective tapes

Collect calls not accepted; calls to Bantam School and College, Connie Redwood

Special orders: rush

BOOKS FOR LISTENING. 289 County Way, Scituate, MA 02066. Ph. (617) 545-6959 or (617) 545-0167

Producer and distributor; 72+ (approximate) titles. Unabridged (50%) and condensed (from Caedmon), no special effects, no music

Genres: Science fiction, mystery, modern fiction, nonfiction, classics, adventure

Discounts available. Terms: Each cassette is \$8 minus \$1.60 (20%) = \$6.40 to libraries only

Damage: replacement at original price

Duplication not permitted

Collect calls accepted by Marion Waddell on (617) 545-0167 line only

Special orders: rush & back

Shipping: Order form available. Shipping and handling \$1.50 per item.

BOOKS IN MOTION. E. 9212 Montgomery, Suite 501, Spokane, WA 99206. Ph. (509) 922-1646

Producer & distributor; 150 (approximate) titles. Unabridged versions, no special effects, no music

Genres: Science fiction, modern fiction, nonfiction, self-help, classics, poetry
Discounts available. Terms: 25% discount, payment net 30 days

Duplication permitted

Collect calls accepted by answering receptionist

Special orders: rush & back

Shipping charges are added to invoice. Advise how shipped, otherwise UPS is used.

BOOKS ON TAPE, INC. P.O. Box 7900, Newport Beach, CA 92658. Ph. (714) 548-5525 & (800) 626-3333

Producer and distributor; 2500 (approximate) titles. Unabridged versions, no special effects, no music

Genres: Science fiction, mystery, modern fiction, nonfiction, self-help, classics, poetry

Discounts available. Terms: with every 10 items purchased at one time, one selection is free of charge

Damage: 1 year guarantee. After 1 year, cassette replaced for \$5

Duplication not permitted

Collect calls not accepted; orders taken by Library Services Dept.

Special orders: rush & back

Orders are invoiced by purchase order number. Orders are shipped within 10 days of receipt

BRILLIANCE CORPORATION. P.O. Box 114, Grand Haven, MI 49417. Ph. (616) 846-5256 or (800) 222-3225

Producer & distributor; 65 titles. Unabridged versions, special effects, music

Genres: Mystery, modern fiction, nonfiction, self-help

Discounts available. Terms: 2% on prepaid order. 1% on payments received within 10 days of invoice date

Damage: Bookcassettes replaced at \$6 per cassette prepaid

Duplication not permitted

Collect calls not accepted; orders taken by Sales Dept.

Special orders: rush & back

Shipping information: Special library packaging (H.D. vinyl cases) available

CAEDMON, A DIVISION OF HARPER & ROW. 1995 Broadway, NY, NY 10023. Ph. (212) 580-3400 or (800) 223-0420

Producer & distributor; 1400 (approximate) titles. Unabridged versions (500) & abridged (800) versions, no special effects, music

Genres: Science fiction, mystery, modern fiction, nonfiction, self-help, classics, poetry

Discounts available. Terms: If full LSP subscription program. No on single list.

Damage: replaced at original cost

Duplication not permitted

Collect calls not accepted; orders to Order Dept.

Special orders: rush & back

Shipping Information: order over 25 cassettes (units in 1 order) we pay freight

COVER TO COVER. 1430 W. Peachtree St. NW, Suite 605, Atlanta, GA 30309. Ph. (404) 881-0188

Distributor; 38 titles (exact). Unabridged versions, no special effects, no music

Genres: Modern fiction, classics, childrens classics, short stories

Discounts available. Terms: 20% off retail

Damage: Replace any cassette immediately at \$7.50 a cassette

Duplication not permitted

Collect calls accepted by P. Sanger

Special orders: rush & back

G.K. HALL. 70 Lincoln Street, Boston MA 02111. Ph. (800) 343-2806 or (617) 423-3990

Producer and distributor; 350 (approximate) titles. Unabridged versions, special effects, music

Genres: Science fiction, mystery, modern fiction, nonfiction, classics, poetry, young adult fiction, westerns

Discounts available. Terms: Standing orders are available at discounts ranging from 10% to 15%

Damage: \$6 per cassette

Duplication not permitted

Collect calls not accepted; orders to Customer Service

Special orders: rush & back

HALVORSON ASSOCIATES. P.O. Box 15676, Chevy Chase, MD 20815. Ph. (301) 654-1698

Producer and distributor; 100 titles (exact). Unabridged versions (80%), abridged versions (10%), condensed (10%), no special effects, no music

Genres: Classics, novels, history, biography, essay, and poetry

Discounts available. Terms: 15% on orders over \$150; 20% over \$300

Damage: At original price for individual damaged or lost cassettes

Duplication is conditional; requires our written agreement

Collect calls not accepted

Special orders: rush

Shipping charges: Libraries and others with established credit: 2% 10 days, net 30.

\$50 minimum order from Halvorson Associates catalog; catalog free upon request

IN THE GROOVE PROFESSIONAL MEDIA SERVICE CORP. 13620 S. Crenshaw Blvd., Gardena, CA 90249. Ph. (800) 223-7672 or (800) 826-2169

Distributor; 1000+ (approximate) titles. Unabridged versions, abridged versions, condensed versions, special effects, music

Genres: Science fiction, mystery, modern fiction, nonfiction, self-help, classics, poetry

Discounts available. Terms: Not specified

Duplication permitted conditionally

Collect calls not accepted; orders to Order Dept.

Special orders: rush & back

Shipping charges: FOB warehouse. No handling charges. Cost is exact cost of shipping and insurance

INGRAM BOOK COMPANY. P.O. Box 17266, 347 Reedwood Dr., Nashville, TN 37217-9989. Ph. (800) 251-5900 or (615) 321-7588

Distributor; 1800 (approximate) titles. Unabridged versions (20%), abridged versions (80%), special effects, music

Genres: Science fiction, mystery, modern fiction, nonfiction, self-help, classics, poetry, business, exercise, drama

Discounts are not available. Terms: Does offer a 46% discount on nonmusic cassettes with minimum (10) to retailers

Damage: We will replace all merchandise that is defective, all other responsibility is covered by the customer

Duplication not permitted

Collect calls not accepted except from Alaska and Hawaii; orders to Ingram Audio, attn.: order processing

Special orders: rush & back

Shipping will be made according to customer instructions

JIM CIN RECORDINGS. P.O. Box 536, Portsmouth, RI 02871. Ph. (401) 847-5148

Producer and distributor; 185 (exact) titles. Unabridged versions, no special effects, no music

Genres: Science fiction, mystery, classics, poetry

Discounts available. Terms: 30 days net. Send purchase order on library stationary and tax exempt number

Damage: 30 days—no charge. After 30 days—\$7 per cassette

Duplication for archival use only

Collect calls not accepted; orders taken by Library Orders Dept.

Special orders: rush

Shipping and handling charges are 5% of order

LISTEN FOR PLEASURE. One Colomba Drive, Niagara Falls, NY 14305 Ph. (800) 962-5200

Producer and distributor; 213 (exact) titles. Abridged versions except for plays and short stories (10%), special effects, no music

Genres: Science fiction, mystery, modern fiction, nonfiction, classics, children, horror, autobiography

Discounts are available. Terms: Ordering 15 or more titles you receive a 40% discount. Net in 30 days

Damage: Manufacturers defects are replaced at no charge, if patron damaged, there is a \$5 replacement charge (includes shipping/handling)

Duplication not permitted

Collect calls not accepted; orders taken by Kathy in the library department

Special orders: rush

LISTENING LIBRARY, INC. One Park Avenue, Old Greenwich, CT 06870. Ph. (800) 243-4505 or (203) 637-3616

Producer and distributor; 1500 (approximate) titles. Unabridged versions (70%), abridged (25%), and condensed (5%), special effects, music

Genres: Science fiction, mystery, modern fiction, nonfiction, classics, poetry, drama, children's audio

Discounts available

Damage: For all of our productions—lifetime free replacement guarantee

Duplication permitted conditionally

Collect calls accepted by Order Dept., Suite QE

Special orders: rush & back

Shipping and handling charges are 4% of total invoice

MIND'S EYE, AVC CORPORATION. 4 Commercial Blvd., Novato, CA 94947. Ph. (415) 883-7701 or (800) 227-2020

Producer and distributor; 400 (approximate) titles. Unabridged versions (30%), abridged versions (30%), condensed versions (40%), special effects, music
Genres: Science fiction, mystery, modern fiction, nonfiction, self-help, classics, poetry

Discounts available. Terms: Most of our programs can be ordered in SETS (discount 15-20%)

Damage: Programs damaged in ANY WAY are replaced FREE. Lost or stolen materials may be replaced at original prices

Duplication permitted conditionally

Collect calls not accepted

Special orders: rush & back

Shipping and handling charges range from \$3.50 to a maximum of \$8 per order

NORWOOD INDUSTRIES, INC. 3828 South Main Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84115. Ph. (801) 262-0800 or (800) 346-8869

Producer and distributor. Unabridged versions, no special effects, no music
Genres: Science fiction, mystery, nonfiction, classics

Discounts available. Terms: Contact Vice-President, Marketing

Damage: If the product is damaged in shipping, the shipping company pays for all damaged products and a new shipment is sent to customer

Collect calls not accepted; orders taken by Order Dept. or Darlene Pearce

Special orders: rush & back

RECORDED BOOKS. P.O. Box 79, Charlotte Hall, MD 20622. Ph. (800) 638-1304

Producer and distributor; 331 (exact) titles. Unabridged versions, no special effects, no music

Genres: Science fiction, mystery, modern fiction, nonfiction, classics, poetry

Discounts available. Terms: 10% for (?) 30

Damage: \$4.75 per cassette includes postage

Duplication not permitted

Collect calls not accepted; orders taken by Sandra Olson

Special orders: rush & back

SOCIETY FOR VISUAL EDUCATION, INC. 1345 Diversity Parkway, Chicago, IL 60614. Ph. (312) 525-1500 or (800) 621-1900

Producer and distributor; 243 (exact) titles. Unabridged version, special effects, music

Genres: Nonfiction, self-help, classics, poetry

Discounts are not available; all prices are school prices; various ordering plans—deposit with order, installment, order a part from a set

Damage: replacement at original price

Duplication not permitted

Collect calls not accepted

Special orders: rush & back

Shipping, processing, and insurance charges vary on a sliding scale from \$2 to 2% of order

SPOKEN ARTS, INC. P.O. Box 289, 310 North Ave., New Rochelle, NY 10801. Ph. (914) 636-5482 or (914) 636-5481

Producer and distributor; 500 (approximate) titles. Unabridged, abridged, condensed versions, special effects, music

Genres: Science fiction, mystery, modern fiction, nonfiction, classics, poetry, mythology, fairy tales, drama, speeches, children's programs

Discounts are not available

Damage: Free replacement for any damaged material

Duplication not permitted

Collect calls accepted by Order Fulfillment Dept.

Special orders: rush & back

STEMMER HOUSE PUBLISHERS, 2627 Caves Road, Owings Mills, MD 21117. Ph. (301) 363-3690

Producer and distributor; 4 (exact) titles. Unabridged versions, special effects, music

Genres: Poetry and children's literature

Discounts available. Terms: For 25 or more of a title

Damage: We will replace recordings received damaged or lost in the mail

Duplication not permitted

Collect calls not accepted; orders taken by the Order Dept.

Special orders: rush & back

All cassettes and books are shipped from our Philadelphia warehouse and returns should be sent to: The Bookery, 6808 Greenway Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19142. Ph. (800) 433-3850. 30 days net for payment

ULVERSCROFT SOUNDINGS, Helen D. Boyle, 279 Boston Street, Guilford, CT 06437. Ph. (203) 453-2080

Producer and distributor; 150+ (approximate) titles. Unabridged versions, special effects, music

Genres: Mystery, modern fiction, nonfiction, classics

Discounts available.

Damage: At original price

Collect calls accepted by Helen D. Boyle

Special orders: rush & back

RESPONSES BY AUDIOVISUAL LIBRARIANS ABOUT BOOKS ON CASSETTE DISTRIBUTORS/PRODUCERS

(numbers of public librarians responding are in parentheses. Slashes separate comments from different librarians)

Company: American Audio Prose Library

Genres: Classics, science fiction, modern fiction, nonfiction

Cost: moderate

Technical quality excellent; style quality excellent with many tapes read by author

Durability was adequate

No damage policy (packaging needed considerable modification)

Company: Baker & Taylor (2)

Genres: Mystery (2), modern fiction (2), self-help (2), science fiction, nonfiction, classics

Cost: low / moderate (average \$14.95 with discount \$8.99 / \$7-\$8)

Technical quality excellent / good; style quality good (2)

Durability was excellent / good
Discounts were available (40% on stock)
No damage policy (2) (packaging needed little or no modification [2])

Company: Brilliance
Genres: Mystery, modern fiction
Cost: low (\$18-\$40)
Technical quality is excellent; style quality is excellent
Durability is good
Discounts available
No damage policy (packaging needed little or no modification)
Comments: these are full-length tapes but recorded in all four tracks so only one-half as many tapes are used.

Company: Books on Tape (3)
Genres: Science fiction, mystery (2), modern fiction (3), nonfiction (3), classics (2)
Cost: high (2)/moderate (from \$60-\$120 per title/\$40-\$100/\$30-\$70)
Technical quality is excellent / good / adequate; style quality is good (2) / excellent
Durability is excellent / adequate / poor, individual cassettes constantly need to be replaced.
Discounts are not available (2); discounts are available
There is a damage policy (one year guarantee / yes [2]) (packaging is unsuitable (2); provided without cases, without description, no title on the cassette, library packaging is now available. / Cardboard boxes with no markings, cassettes not marked either. / Little or no modification, until recently everything had to be packaged in albums. Labeled packaging is now supplied).
Comments: Some responded that there were no problems (2); company had to be prompted repeatedly to ship. We have recently begun purchasing library packaging which will resolve some of these problems. / Titles shipped separately—billing was a mess. Impressive array of titles, however not all available for purchase.

Company: Carolina Cassette Distributors (2)
Genres: science fiction (2), mystery (2), modern fiction, nonfiction, self-help (2), classics (2), poetry
Cost: high (acquisitions staff cannot handle ordering singly. / \$10.98+)
Technical quality responses were no complaints / good; style quality was excellent
Durability was good
Discounts were available / not available
Damage policy was unclear (approximately half of books on tape come in a suitable package for circulating, others are transferred to suitable containers.
Comments: Generally pleased. They are timely, have few cancellations, and responsive to replacement and repair.

Company: Chivers Audio Books (distributed by G.K. Hall [2])
Genres: mystery, modern fiction (2), classics
Cost: moderate (2) (\$59.95)
Technical quality is adequate / good; style quality is good (2)
Durability is poor / adequate
Discounts available / unavailable
There was a damage policy; there was not a damage policy (packaging needed little or no modification).
Comments: Excellent choice of titles but continual problem with tapes and replacement of damaged materials.

Company: G.K. Hall Audio Books (11)

Genres: Science fiction (2), mystery (8), classics (3), modern fiction (8), Gothic, romance (2), nonfiction, juvenile, Western (2)

Cost: moderate (8), high (2) (\$40-\$60 / \$32-\$55 for complete books (4-8 cassettes) / \$30-\$50 / 6 cassettes-\$42.50 / \$30-\$45

Technical quality was good (5) / excellent (3) / adequate (2) style quality was good (5) / excellent (3), clear, easy to listen to voices / adequate

Durability was adequate (6); fair amount of problems with tape recorders grabbing tapes / good (4). We have tapes that get battered due to misuse but that is typical.

Discounts are not available (7); discounts are available (2) (have to sign up for a specific subject area and receive a certain number of titles per year for a discount).

There is a damage policy (7); there is not a damage policy (3) (packaging needs little or no modification [9]). Very durable attractive binders. / Unsuitable at first but they have changed and now use a nice plastic holder.

Comments: No problems (7) / except a complete order is never received at one time, titles are always back ordered. Some delay in getting replacements / must return within 60 days. Good packaging but not enough current bestseller type cassettes. / This company I rate one of the best. Our patrons very pleased with them.

Company: Ingram

Genres: science fiction, mystery, modern fiction, nonfiction, self-help, classics

Cost: moderate (\$8)

Technical quality is good; style quality is good.

Durability is adequate.

Discounts available

No damage policy (packaging needed considerable modification).

Company: Listen for Pleasure (3)

Genres: modern fiction (3), classics (3), science fiction (2), mystery (2), poetry, nonfiction, self-help

Cost: moderate (3) (\$13.95 with 25% discount on orders of 10 or more / \$10-\$70

Technical quality is good (2) / excellent; style quality is excellent (2), famous actors and actresses narrating / good

Durability is good (2) / excellent

Discounts are available (2) / discounts are not available

There is a damage policy (2); there is not a damage policy (packaging needed considerable modification)

Comments: no problems (2) / no preview policy. Free teacher's guides for some titles; card catalog kits available at \$1.25 on prepaid basis from Specialized Supply Co. / No library discount.

Company: The Mind's Eye

Genres: science fiction, mystery, classics, old radio shows

Cost: moderate (\$5.98-\$39.95)

Technical quality is excellent; style quality is excellent

Durability is good

Discounts are not available

There is no damage policy (packaging needs little or no modification).

Comments: There were no problems. This company offers a wide variety of cassettes.

Company: Recorded Books, Inc. (7)

Genres: mystery (6), modern fiction (5), nonfiction (7), classics (7), science fiction (3), poetry (2), business

Cost: moderate (7) (\$20-\$50 / Prices are less now than in earlier years. / \$35 / \$29.95-\$49.95 / 2 cassettes-\$6.95, 4 cassettes-\$24.95).

Technical quality is good (3) / excellent (3); style quality is good (4) / excellent

Durability: adequate (2) / good (2) / excellent

Discounts are available (5); discounts are not available (2) (regular pricing in their catalog).

There is a damage policy (4); there is no damage policy (3) (packaging needs little or no modification [6] / needed considerable modification).

Comments: no problems (5); very good company to work with—highly recommended.

Company: Ulverscroft

Genres: modern fiction

Cost: low

Technical quality is good; style quality is good.

Discounts are available

There is no damage policy (packaging needs little or no modification, very nice attractive well made binders).

Comments: Fast on replacement tapes. No problems.

APPENDIX A

Questionnaire Sent to Producers and Distributors of Books on Cassette

UNABRIDGED BOOKS ON CASSETTE TAPE

1. Add phone and correct address if in error.
2. Is your organization a producer or distributor or both?
producer ☐ distributor ☐ both ☐
3. What is the number of books on cassette titles your organization currently has for sale?
Is this number exact? ☐ or approximate? ☐
4. In relation to the currently accepted printed versions of these works are your materials?
unabridged ☐ abridged ☐ condensed ☐
5. If more than one in no. 4 applies then what are the approximate percentages of each?
unabridged ____ abridged ____ condensed ____
6. Are sound effects or music included in any or all of these formats?
sound effects ☐ music ☐ neither ☐
7. Do you offer a library discount or other special pricing for libraries or others?
yes ☐ no ☐
8. If yes then what terms must be met?
9. Which of these types of titles are found in your catalog?
science fiction ☐ mystery ☐ other modern fiction ☐ nonfiction ☐
self-help ☐ classics ☐ poetry ☐ other(s)?
10. What is your policy for replacing lost, stolen, or damaged materials?
none ☐ at original price ☐ other ☐. If "other" please elaborate.
11. Are libraries allowed to duplicate recordings for protection against damage and theft?
yes ☐ no ☐ conditionally ☐
12. Do you accept collect calls for orders?
yes ☐ no ☐
13. To what department or individuals should orders be addressed?
14. Are rush and/or back orders possible?
rush ☐ back ☐ neither ☐
15. Are there other shipping and billing policies that need explanation?
If so, could you explain briefly?

APPENDIX B

Questionnaire sent to Audiovisual Librarians in Public Libraries about their Books on Cassette Collections

UNABRIDGED BOOKS ON CASSETTE TAPE

1. Name of producer/distributor.
2. Dates of first and last use.
 / / through / /
3. Was a library discount offered? yes ☐ no ☐.
 If so, did you make use of it? yes ☐ no ☐.
 If no, why not?
4. What types of titles did you order?
 science fiction ☐ mystery ☐ other modern fiction ☐ nonfiction ☐
 self-help ☐ classics ☐ poetry ☐ other(s) ☐ (list please).
5. Did you find the costs in relation to other producers to be:
 low ☐ moderate ☐ high ☐. Could you give the approximate range of costs or
 other examples?
6. Have you ever had occasion to make use of their policy for the replacement
 of lost or damaged materials? yes ☐ no ☐. If yes, did they live up to expectations?
 yes ☐ no ☐. If no then elaborate please.
7. How suitable was the original packaging for library use?
 little or no modification ☐ needed considerable modification ☐
 unsuitable ☐ comments?
8. How would you rate the technical quality of tape and reproduction of these
 materials?
 poor ☐ adequate ☐ good ☐ excellent ☐ comments?
9. How would you rate the oral stylistic quality of the readings in general?
 poor ☐ adequate ☐ good ☐ excellent ☐ comments?
10. How would you rate the durability of these materials under repeated use?
 poor ☐ adequate ☐ good ☐ excellent ☐ comments?
11. Did you have any noteworthy problems with delays, billing, shipping, preview
 policies, etc.? If so, please explain.
12. Please place any other comments or questions here or on the reverse.

APPENDIX C

Additional Names, Addresses, and Formats of Producers/Distributors

(Name, Address, Phone, and Formats)

Baker and Taylor

Format: all
652 E. Main St.
All Audio Catalog
P.O. Box 6420
Bridgewater, NJ 08807-0420
Eastern Division
50 Kirby Avenue
Somerville, NJ 08876
Ph. (201) 722-8000

Carolina Cassette

Format: all
P.O. Box 429 1212
Longview Drive
New Bern, NC 28560
Ph. (919) 638-5583

Cassette Book Company

Format: unknown
P.O. Box 7111
Pasadena, CA 91109
Ph. (818) 799-4139

Dercum Press

Format: unabridged
P.O. Box 1425
West Chester, PA 19380
Ph. (215) 430-8889

J. Norton Publishers

Format: unknown
Suite A2 On-The-Green
Guilford, CT 06437
Ph. (203) 453-9794

Newman Communications, Inc.

Format: unknown
2700 Broadbent Parkway NE
Albuquerque, NM 87107
Ph. (505) 345-1843

Random House, Inc.

Format: unknown
201 E. 50th Street
New York, NY 10022

SBI Publishers in Sound

Format: unknown
Willow Street
South Lee, MA 02160

TapeWorm Inc.

Format: unknown
Box 5524
Rockville, MD 20855
Ph. (800) 638-8798 (301) 258-7618

Warner Audio Publishers

Format: unknown
105 Fifth Avenue, Suite 6A
New York, NY 10003
Ph. (212) 206-7799

Zondervan

Format: unknown
1415 Lake Drive SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49506
Ph. (800) 253-1309

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